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NEW SOUTH WALES.

DIGEST OF CURRENT STATISTICS.

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GENERAL

A slowing down in the rate of business expansion in New South Wales during the first seven months of 1956 is indicated by the trends in statistics of employment, money volume and turnover, transport and trade. Production in such basic industries as coal, electricity, and steel has been maintained at or near record levels but demand for many types of manufactured goods has not remained as strong as last year. Unfavourable weather conditions, tightening of credit and growing scarcity of some imported materials may have been factors in retarding business activity in recent months.

New South Wales wool production in 1955-56 is estimated to have reached a record figure and dairy output was also the highest since before the war. However, excessive rains during autumn and winter have adversely affected stock and pastures in many districts and created very unfavourable conditions for the sowing and growth of cereal crops.

PART I : EMPLOYMENT AND NON-RURAL INDUSTRIES.EMPLOYMENT - New South Wales (See also graph p. 87)

(The data in this section exclude rural workers, women in private domestic service, defence forces and national servicemen. 1956 figures are subject to revision).

The general upward trend in employment of recent years slowed down early in 1956. Private employment reached a peak of 829,100 in April and May and then fell to 827,100 in June. Government employment, mainly in Construction, Transport and Services, continued to rise slowly, but total employment in June 1956 was 1,300 (800 men and 500 women) below the May figure. Factory survey figures for July indicate a further decline in that industry, and Commonwealth Employment Service statistics confirm the easing trend in labour demand. Recorded employment in June 1956 was 16300 or 1½% higher than in June 1955, as compared with rises of about 3½% between June 1954 and 1955 and June 1953 and 1954.

N.S.W. : WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS IN CIVIL EMPLOYMENT - Thousands

Year and Month	Males	Females	Persons		
			Government	Private	Total
1939 - July	529.9	168.0	155.9	542.0	697.9
1951 - November	765.0	295.2	248.3	811.9	1,060.2
1954 - January	748.1	277.0	246.1	779.0	1,025.1
1955 - June	779.2	292.5	257.5	814.2	1,071.7
- November	784.1	301.5	257.2	828.4	1,085.6
1956 - April	787.8	300.4	259.1	829.1	1,088.2
- May	788.6	300.7	260.2	829.1	1,089.3
- June	787.8	300.2	260.9	827.1	1,088.0

The principal employment changes during June were a decline of 800 to 391,600 in factories and of 1,100 to 164,800 in wholesale and retail trade, the latter movement being largely of a seasonal character. Continuous rises in recent months have raised the employment total in the Building and Construction group above the 1952 peak of 78,100.

N.S.W. WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS IN CIVIL EMPLOYMENT - Thousands

	Two Years en- ded June 1953		1955		1956	
	Peak	Low	June	Nov.	April	May
Coal Mines	21.7	19.6	20.3	19.7	18.6	18.6
Factories	386.9	345.5	388.2	393.3	393.1	392.4
Building & Construction	78.1	61.8	75.0	74.9	77.3	78.1
Road Transport	40.2	36.6	37.8	38.2	39.0	39.2
Shipping & Stevedoring	18.7	17.1	19.1	18.6	18.1	18.4
Rail & Air Transport	44.2	40.9	43.1	43.0	43.4	43.0
Finance & Property	36.8	35.7	39.9	39.9	42.6	42.6
Wholesale & Produce Trade	67.2	61.0	68.1	69.5	69.6	69.4
Retail Trade	101.9	88.9	95.7	100.6	96.3	96.5
Prof. & Pers'l Services	152.9	148.4	157.5	160.1	162.5	162.2
ALL RECORDED GROUPS (incl. Others)	1060.2	986.2	1071.7	1085.6	1088.2	1089.3
						1088.0

Commonwealth Employment Service statistics for New South Wales show that the decline of recent months in the number of unfilled vacancies continued in July 1956 when the total of 11,300 (8,000 men and 3,300 women) was only about one-half of the 1955 average. The number of unemployed applicants for jobs rose from 11,000 persons in June 1956 to 12,300 (7,400 men and 4,900 women) in July, that is about double the 1955 average. A fall during July of 1,800 to 4,000 in the number of applicants in jobs seeking a change in employment was due mainly to the cancellation of labour requirements on a large project for which men employed elsewhere in the district had registered. Generally the excess of registered applicants over unfilled vacancies is greater outside the metropolitan area than in Sydney, and for women in particular employment opportunities in country areas have for some time been insufficient. The number of persons in receipt of unemployment benefits in New South Wales rose from 2,300 at the end of June 1956 to 3,100 (2,200 men and 900 women) in July, as compared with from 600 to 1,300 throughout 1955.

COMMONWEALTH EMPLOYMENT SERVICE Registrations N.S.W. & N.C.T.				UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS	
End of Month	Applicants Unplaced			Vacancies Unfilled	Recipients, N.S.W.
	Net in Jobs	In Jobs	Total		
1951 August	4,300	4,300	8,600	58,900	100
1952 Dec.	35,700	3,000	38,700	5,900	25,100
1955 May	6,800	3,200	10,000	23,100	1,100
1956 May	10,700	5,900	16,600	13,300	1,850
June	11,000	5,800	16,800	12,900	2,300
July	12,300	4,000	16,300	11,300	3,100
1956, July					
	Applicants Unplaced			Vacancies Unfilled	
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Metropolitan Area	5,500	3,900	9,400	5,100	2,500
OTHER N.S.W. & N.C.T.	3,900	3,000	6,900	2,900	800
Total	9,400	6,900	16,300	8,000	3,300
					11,300

An employment survey of larger privately-owned factories in

New South Wales (by the Department of Labour and National Service and the Commonwealth Statistician) shows a gradual decline from a peak of 198,600 persons in February 1956 to 194,300 in July, due partly to a seasonal fall in the employment of food factories, and more recently to a slackening in the motor, electrical and clothing trades. This was only partly offset by some firms in the metal and other industries taking advantage of the greater availability of labour. Recorded employment in July 1956 was 500 men and 800 women less than a year earlier.

EMPLOYMENT IN LARGER PRIVATE FACTORIES SURVEYED - N.S.W. - Thousand Persons

Industrial Group	July '54	July '55	Feb. '56	May '56	June '56	July '56
Building Materials	14.0	14.9	15.2	15.0	14.8	14.9
Basic Metals	30.8	31.9	31.6	32.6	32.7	32.9
Transport Equipment	17.4	20.2	21.8	22.1	20.7	20.5
Other Metal Mfrs.	45.6	47.4	47.5	46.8	46.6	46.4
Chemical Products	8.5	8.7	9.0	9.0	9.0	8.9
Clothing & Textiles	30.9	30.0	29.5	29.3	29.4	29.3
Food, Drink & Tobacco	19.5	19.7	21.5	19.5	19.1	18.9
Other Industries	21.7	22.8	22.5	22.5	22.4	22.5
Total: Men	144.1	149.5	151.3	151.0	149.3	149.0
Women	44.3	46.1	47.3	45.8	45.4	45.3
Persons	188.4	195.6	198.6	196.8	194.7	194.3
Total, excl. Food etc.	168.9	175.9	177.1	177.3	175.6	175.4

GAS AND ELECTRICITY = New South Wales (See also graph p. 88).

Gas and electricity production in New South Wales reached new record levels in the year ended June 1956. Gas production rose from 21,363m. cub.ft. in 1954-55 to 21,944 m.cub.ft. in 1955-56 and is now more than twice the pre-war rate of output. Electricity generation rose by 8% to 6,497 m.kWh. in 1955-56, that is about three and a half times the pre-war figure. Power from hydro-electric stations gained increased importance in 1955-56 and contributed about 7% of the total, as against 2% in 1954-55. The combined gas and electricity consumption index for the Sydney area, on the base of 1936/7 - 1938/9 = 100, rose from 255 in 1954 to 267 in 1955-56 and had reached 281 by June 1956.

Av. Year 1937-39	Year ended June					June Quarter		
	1953	1954	1955	1956	1954	1955	1956	
PRODUCTION = New South Wales								
G.A.S.=mill.cub.ft.	10,789	20,216	20,802	21,363	21,944	5,476	5,428	5,796
ELECTRICITY=m.kWh.	1,284	4,868	5,450	5,998	6,497	1,463	1,588	1,711
INDEX OF G.S & ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION - SYDNEY								
1936/7-38/9 = 100	100	222	241	255	267	247	257	276

COAL PRODUCTION - New South Wales and Australia (See also graph p. 88)

Black Coal production in the main Australian producer States in 1955-56 was slightly below last year's level, and the Australian total of 18.8m. tons compares with 19.3m. tons in 1954-55 and 1953-54. The reduction was confined to open cuts, and underground production of about 16.7m. tons in 1955-56 was a record. New South Wales has produced about 77% of the Australian total in recent years as compared with 83% in 1936-39. Australian coal exports in 1955-56 totalled about 200,000 tons (300,000 tons in 1954-55). Brown Coal production in Victoria continued to expand and reached the record figure of 10.4m. tons in 1955-56.

COAL PRODUCTION - AUSTRALIA - in thousand tons.

Year ended June	Average 1937-39	1953		1954		1955		1956 (b)
		Black	Coral	Black	Coral	Black	Coral	
New South Wales	10,273		14,264		14,926		14,599	14,554
Queensland	1,184		2,676		2,597		2,777	2,659
Western Australia	572		767		950		975	775
Victoria	310		151		139		135	123
Tasmania	91		241		243		279	299
South Australia	...		414		471		494	454
Total Australia -								
Underground	(a)		14,981		16,256		16,610	16,679
Open Cuts	(a)		3,532		3,070		2,649	2,185
Total:	12,430		18,513		19,326		19,259	18,864
		Brown	Coral					
Victoria	3,573		8,074		8,750		9,668	10,350

(a) Practically all from underground workings. (b) Subject to revision.

New South Wales coal production in the first four months of 1956 was about 5% less than in the corresponding period of 1955 but it has since increased to the comparatively high rate of over 300,000 tons a week. Production for the first 32 weeks of the year was 8.4m. tons in 1956, as against 8.5m. tons in 1955 and 8.9m. tons in 1954. The decrease was mainly in open-cut production.

COAL PRODUCTION - NEW SOUTH WALES - Thousand Tons

	Year ended December				Thirty-two Weeks ended			
	1952	1953	1954	1955	8/8/1953	7/8/1954	6/8/1955	4/8/1956
Underground	12,492	12,452	13,703	13,819	7,105	7,997	7,971	7,882
Open Cut	2,530	1,722	1,380	900	1,072	870	546	495
Total	15,022	14,174	15,083	14,719	8,177	8,867	8,517	8,377

+ Incl. 2 weeks holidays in 1953 and 1954 and 3 weeks in 1955 and 1956.

IRON AND STEEL PRODUCTION (See also graph p. 88)

The post-war expansion of the iron and steel industry in New South Wales continued in 1955-56, and the year's totals of 1.78m. tons of pig iron and 2.33m. tons of ingot steel were about 8% above the previous peak of 1954-55. About 60% of steel and a little over 50% of the pig iron output came from the Port Kembla plants in 1955-56 and the balance from Newcastle. Steel production has now reached double the immediate pre-war rate.

IRON AND STEEL PRODUCTION = Mill. Tons

	Year ended June					June Quarter		
	1939	1950	1954	1955	1956	1954	1955	1956
Pig Iron - N.S.W.	1.11	1.00	1.62	1.67	1.78	.39	.39	.46
Whyalla S.A.12	.19	.18	.15	.04	.05	.06	
Ingot Steel - N.S.W.	1.17	1.27	2.09	2.16	2.33	.53	.52	.61

NEW SOUTH WALES RAILWAYS.

Passenger traffic on the State railways in the year 1955-56 with a total of 280½ mill. passenger journeys was about 1 mill. below the 1954-55 peak, and goods traffic of 18 mill. tons was appreciably less than in the two preceding years. An increase of 12½% fares and some freight increases, which came into force in September 1955, helped to maintain gross earnings, but total revenue of £76.4m. remained about 2½m. below the budget estimate, while working expenses of £75m. exceeded the 1954-55 figure by £6.5m. and the budget estimate by about £2m. The working surplus of £15m. for 1955-56 was the smallest for five years, and after allowing for capital charges (details of which are not yet available) the deficiency on railway account is estimated to be in the vicinity of £7½m.

NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

Year Ended June	Passenger Journeys	Goods, excl. Livestock	Gross (a) Earnings	Working (b) Expenses	Surplus on Working A/c.	Capital Charges	Net Surplus or Deficiency
	million	mill. tons	£mill.	£mill.	£mill. (a)	£mill. (b)	£mill. (a)
1939	186.7	14.68	19.94	14.54	5.40	6.57	- 1.17
1951	268.6	17.13	50.25	49.17	1.08	7.50	- 6.42
1952	268.2	18.53	69.71	64.02	5.69	8.14	- 2.45
1953	271.7	17.88	73.47	66.45	7.02	8.47	- 1.45
1954	278.9	19.35	75.57	67.40	8.17	8.02	+ 0.15
1955	281.4	18.66	74.36	68.40	5.96	8.31	- 2.35
1956	280.5	18.05	76.39	74.90	1.49	not yet available	

(a) Includes Government contribution for developmental lines, £1m. in 1953-54 to 1955-56 and £0.8m. in earlier years. (b) Including Sinking Fund Contrib. for retirement of assets.

The table below shows gross ton mileage (weight of train related to distance travelled) for passenger trains, classified by type of traction. This gives an indication of the expansion in recent years in electric and diesel powered trains which in gross ton-mileage have exceeded steam trains from the middle of 1955 onward. This reflects the growth of suburban traffic, extended electrification and introduction of new types of express trains; replacement of wooden by steel coaches on suburban lines has also added to the ton-mileage figure of electric trains as shown below.

NEW SOUTH WALES RAILWAYS - PASSENGER TRAFFIC - MILLION GROSS TON MILES

Year	Steam	Electric	Rail Motor, Diesel & Diesel Electric	Total
1944-45	2,794	2,453	68	5,315
1953-54	2,956	2,793	104	5,853
1954-55	2,902	2,868	117	5,887
1955-56	2,742	3,096	270	6,108

PORT OF SYDNEY.

Cargo handled in the Port of Sydney declined from 8.8m. tons in 1954-55 to 8.6m. tons in 1955-56, due to a fall in inward cargo. Oversea imports of motor spirit and other oil products fell from 1.3m. tons in 1954-55 to 1m. tons in 1955-56, but for Botany Bay (which is not included in Port of Sydney) they rose from 440,000 tons to 1.2m. tons. Discharges of motor vehicles and parts, iron and steel and timber into Sydney also declined in 1955-56. Intrastate (mainly coal) and interstate imports into Sydney in 1955-56 were higher than in recent years. Oversea export tonnage of 1.5m. tons in 1955-56 was the heaviest for six years because of the comparatively high level of exports of wool (500,000 tons) and wheat and flour (440,000 tons).

SHIPPING CARGO IN THE PORT OF SYDNEY = Thousand Tons.

Year Ended June	OVERSEAS		INTERSTATE		INTRASTATE		TOTAL	
	Inward	Outward	Inward	Outward	Inward	Outward	Inward	Outward
1939	2,045	1,429	1,187	798	1,896	340	5,128	2,567
1952	4,236	1,155	903	532	1,837	117	6,976	1,804
1954	3,166	1,433	948	798	2,028	62	6,142	2,293
1955	3,687	1,331	987	700	2,000	46	6,674	2,077
1956	3,109	1,530	1,073	573	2,282	25	6,464	2,128

Net tonnage of ships entering the Port of Sydney in 1955-56,
 9.5m. tons, was a little below the post-war record figure of 9.7m. tons
 in 1954-55. For Newcastle it was 3.8m. tons (3.5m. tons in 1954-55),
 for Port Kembla 1.8m. tons (1.9m. tons) and for Botany Bay 600,000 tons
 (200,000 tons).

MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS = New-South Wales (see also graph p. 88).

New car registrations in New South Wales were at the record rate of over 5,600 a month in August and September 1955; they began to decline a little, relative to 1955, in March quarter 1956, and even more so in June quarter when increased sales tax rates (in force from 15th March) became effective. Average monthly registrations were 4,000 in the first half of 1956, as compared with 4,800 and 5,200 in the first and second halves of 1955. The total number of cars on the State register rose from about 437,400 in June 1955 to 478,800 in June 1956, an increase of 41,400, equal to 74% (1954-55: 80%) of new registrations. This indicates that on balance about one old car was deregistered for every three (in 1954-55, four) new cars registered. In 1939 there was one car per 13 of the State population, in 1955 one per 8 and in 1956 one per 7½.

Registrations of new commercial vehicles (lorries, utilities and vans) also eased a little in the first half of 1956; in June quarter they were at the monthly rate of 2,050, as compared with 2,200 in June quarter 1955. The increase in the total of commercial vehicles registered during the past three years was little more than one-half of new registrations, which suggests a comparatively heavy scrappage of old vehicles. New registrations of tractors for road use in 1955-56 were a little below the high rate of 1954-55. The number of motor cycles on the register continued to fall; it was 37,000 at the end of June 1956, as against 47,500 four years earlier.

MOTOR VEHICLES = New South Wales

	Cars	Lorries, Utilities and Vans	Taxis & Buses	Road Tractors	Motor Cycles	Total
	New Registrations					Per period
Year 1937-38	23,000	10,200	800	200	2,700	36,900
Year 1953-54	43,200	21,200	500	1,300	3,000	69,200
1954-55						
July-Dec.	27,300	12,900	200	900	1,600	42,900
Jan.-June	28,600	11,900	200	800	1,800	43,300
Year	55,900	24,800	400	1,700	3,400	86,200
1955-56						
July-Dec.	31,500	13,700	200	900	1,600	47,900
Jan.-June	24,200	12,200	300	700	1,400	38,800
Year	55,700	25,900	500	1,600	3,000	86,700
	Total on Register - End of Period					
June 1939	213,300	76,700	4,800 x	1,000	24,200	320,000
June 1954	394,000	210,100	8,000 x	10,200	42,400	664,700
June 1955	437,400	223,700	8,200 x	12,100	39,800	721,200
June 1956	478,800	238,800	8,300 x	14,400	37,000	777,300

x Including hire cars and tourist vehicles.

Of the new cars registered in New South Wales in 1955-56 (1954-55 in brackets) 29% (26%) were Holden cars, 50% (56%) British makes, 12% (11%) American makes and 9% (7%) from continental Europe.

WAGES AND EARNINGS - New South Wales.

After being fairly steady in 1954 wages and earnings moved up steadily in 1955 and the first half of 1956. The basic wage rate for men in Sydney (State awards), which had been fixed at £12. 3. 0 from September 1953 to November 1955, rose to £12.16. 0 in May and £13. 3. 0 in August 1956 (£9. 17. 0 for women). The nominal wage index for men which is based on award rates, with the three years ended June 1939 = 100, advanced from 333 in June and September quarter 1955 to 344 in March quarter and 349 in June quarter 1956. Average weekly wage earnings per male unit employed in this State, which includes overtime and bonus payments etc., and salaries as well as wages, rose by £1. 5. 6 to £17.13. 0 between June quarter 1954 and 1955 and then by 13/6 to reach £18. 11. 6 in June quarter 1956; the lesser rise in the 1955-56 period may be due partly to less overtime and smaller above-award payments.

WEEKLY WAGES AND EARNINGS - New South Wales - Adult Male Rates

Month of Change	Basic Wage, Sydney (State Awards) £ per week.	Quarter	Nominal Wage Rate Index, N.S.W. 1937-9 = 100	Average Weekly Earnings per Male Unit £ per week
1950 May	6. 18. 0	1950 June	197	10. 1. 0
1953 "	12. 10. 0	1953 "	319	15.17. 0
1954 "	12. 3. 0	1954 "	326	16. 7. 6
1955 "	12. 3. 0	1955 "	333	17.13. 0
1956 Feb.	12. 15. 0	1956 March	344	17. 9. 0
May	12. 16. 0	June	349	18.11. 6

A comparison of proportional changes in the different series shows that while in 1954-55 earnings made the largest gains the increase in 1955-56 was 5% for all the series shown.

Percent. Increase June Quarters.	BASIC WAGE Men, Sydney	NOMINAL WAGE RATES		AVERAGE EARNINGS Male Units
		Men	Women	
1946 to 1954	145%	143%	166%	142%
1954 to 1955	-	2%	1%	8%
1955 to 1956	5%	5%	5%	5%

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES - New South Wales.

Dispute losses in New South Wales coal mines in the first half of 1956 totalled about 97,000 man-working days, as against 80,000 in January-June 1955. They included a one-day stoppage by all miners (about 11,300) in protest against general conditions in the industry, and series of sympathy strikes about the closing of the Bellbird Mine and changed organisation at Elrington. Dispute losses in other industries, totalling 358,000 man-working days in the half year, were comparatively heavy. Nearly one-half of that time was lost on the waterfront, mainly in protest against wages and margins. A dispute over an award threw about 1,100 men idle at a Newcastle steel-works for three months, and a number of other major disputes occurred in the metal trades over dismissals and wages, in road transport over one-man buses and in wool stores over the handling of wool shorn under a disputed award.

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, N.S.W. : MAN-WORKING DAYS LOST (Thousands).

	Y e a r					January-June (Estimate)			
	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1953	1954	1955	1956
Coal Mines	381	257	345	256	208	299	127	80	97
Other Industries	356	502	395	278	488	134	55	173	358
TOTAL:	737	759	740	534	696	433	182	253	455

PART II: FINANCE AND TRADE.

BANKING - GENERAL

(Major sources and uses of bank funds, as summarized below, do not quite balance because of omissions on both sides, partial estimations and divergencies in the bases used. The figures are intended only to illustrate trends. "Volume of Money" as shown in the first table, and as items (4) and (5) of the second table, follows the definition used in Commonwealth Bank publications. The tables have been revised since their previous publication in the Digest).

Money volume (defined here as notes and coin and non-Government trading and savings bank deposits) is influenced by the rate of economic activity and growth as well as by price fluctuations. The upward trend in money volume of 1953 and 1954 slowed down gradually during 1955 and the first half of 1956. The usual seasonal peak was reached in March 1956 with £2,986m. but the subsequent decline to £2,930m. in June was comparatively heavy and left the total only $1\frac{1}{2}$ above the corresponding 1955 figure. This increase is well below the rise in price levels over the year.

VOLUME OF MONEY = AUSTRALIA. (Items (4) and (5) of next table).

	Sept.	Dec.	March	June	Sept.	Dec.	March	June	Rise over Year (%)	
	£ million									(F.A.C.)
1951-52	2,423	2,522	2,538	2,426	15%	11%	1%	- 2%		
1952-53	2,380	2,511	2,662	2,642	- 2%	- 1%	5%	9%		
1953-54	2,637	2,760	2,850	2,814	11%	10%	7%	7%		
1954-55	2,789	2,877	2,933	2,898	6%	4%	3%	3%		
1955-56	2,870	2,970	2,986	2,930	3%	3%	2%	1%		

Australia's international reserves are estimated to have fallen by £78m. to £350m. in the year 1955-56. This outflow of funds was offset by the purchase of Government securities by the Central Bank (mainly in the first half of the period) and the savings-banks. Growth of bank loans was relatively small and confined^{to} mortgage type advances by the Rural Credits Department of the Commonwealth Bank (from £64m. to £87m.) and the savings banks, while trading bank advances fell by £19m. (to £972m.) over the year. This contrasts with the position in 1951-52 and 1954-55 when expansion of bank credit played the major part in offsetting a large outflow of funds.

Most of the net rise in bank funds in the two years ended June 1956 went into savings accounts (which in turn are mostly invested in bonds or long-term loans.) Trading bank deposits which remained practically unchanged between June 1954 and 1955 fell by £43m. in 1955-56 but this may be partly due to transfers from current to savings accounts. The rise in the note and coin issue has slowed down in recent years, and in 1955-56 was equivalent to only 2% of total circulation.

SOME SOURCES AND USES OF BANK FUNDS = £million

(b) 1956 prelim. estimates only. Weekly averages for June, except for (1) (3b) and (5a) at end of June. (2) Including advances to public by cheque-paying banks, savings banks (estim) and Rural Credits Department of Commonwealth Bank (3a, c) Excluding Government deposits (estim.) (3a) Including some British securities also included in (1). (3c, 5b) Cheque-paying banks. (5b) Excluding Government and interbank deposits.

DEBITS TO CUSTOMERS' ACCOUNTS - New South Wales Trading Banks.
 (All trading banks operating in the State, excluding Government accounts at city banks and Central Bank transactions.)

Money turnovers in New South Wales, as indicated by bank debits rose seasonally between March and June quarters 1956, but unlike earlier years they remained below the level of the preceding December quarter. The increase over the corresponding 1954-55 periods was 5% in June quarter and 7% for the year ended June 1956, compared with rises of 9% in 1954-55 over 1953-54 and of 13% in 1953-54 over 1952-53.

DEBITS TO CUSTOMERS' ACCOUNTS - New South Wales

Weekly Average	1947-48	1953-54	1954-55	1955-56	Percent. Rise 1955-56 on 1954-55.
	£ million				
September Quarter	64.1	159.9	177.5	193.5	9%
December Quarter	70.3	177.0	190.5	211.4	11%
March Quarter	66.9	168.5	183.0	190.0	4%
June Quarter	76.1	182.4	198.9	208.5	5%
Year	69.4	171.7	187.5	200.9	7%

MAJOR PRIVATE TRADING BANKS - Australia (See also graph p. 88)

Australian trading bank deposits were probably reduced in recent months through some transfers to the new private savings banks but even allowing for that the seasonal decline was comparatively severe. The fall in total deposits between March and July 1956 totalled £91m. or 7%, as compared with decreases of £83m. and £61m. in the corresponding periods of 1955 and 1954. The fall in current deposits in 1956 was £107m. but this was partly offset by a rise in interest-bearing deposits. Current deposits in July were £45m. and total deposits £38m. less than a year earlier, and they were also below the level of July 1954. Only minor fluctuations occurred in bank advances during recent months. Withdrawal demands were met mainly by reductions in Special Accounts and security holdings.

MAJOR PRIVATE TRADING BANKS - Business within Australia

Average of weekly figures	Deposits at Credit of Customers		Advan-	Central	Public Secur-	Treas-	Cash Items	Ratio to Deposits			
	At In- terest	Other	ces to Custom- ers.	Bank Special Accts.				ad- van-	Spec- ial A/c.	Cash & Secur- ties	
	£ million										Per cent
1954-July	254	1,017	1,271	725	308	124	34	66	57	24	18
1955-July	268	1,013	1,281	830	239	114	19	69	65	19	16
1956-Mar.	259	1,075	1,334	776	264	119	92	66	58	20	21
-June	269	991	1,260	794	228	121	29	66	63	18	17
-July	275	968	1,243	798	223	116	30	65	64	18	17

SYDNEY STOCK EXCHANGE

The downward tendency of recent months in Sydney share prices was halted in July. Improved demand kept quotations at an even level throughout the second half of the month and the first week of August. However no gains as against June were recorded in the series shown below except for pastoral finance and insurance shares. The July index figures for 75 shares were 7% lower than in January 1956.

INDEX OF SHARE PRICES - SYDNEY - (Compiled by N.S.W. Govt. Statistician),

	Manufacturing & Distributing	Retail	Public Utilities	Pastoral Finance	Insurance	Total 75 Companies	34 Active Shares
						Par Value = 100	Index - Year 1947 = 100
1946-Dec.	292	252	197	161	323	230	247
1951-June	530	398	167	302	757	367	357
1952-Dec.	35	244	151	189	557	247	248
1955-July	440	438	165	270	582	326	327
1956-May	411	387	147	238	563	301	299
-June	400	378	145	235	566	296	293
-July	398	371	145	242	574	294	294
1951-Peak	161	128	92	182	202	143	134
1952-Low	107	79	77	111	136	96	92
1955-Peak	134	141	89	158	153	127	122
1956-July	121	120	75	142	147	115	109

SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS - New South Wales and Australia.

The recently established private savings banks have made steady progress, and total deposits with them at the end of June 1956, £23m. in New South Wales and £44m. in Australia, were equivalent to 6% and 4% respectively of total savings deposits. The Commonwealth and State Savings Banks lost some deposits in recent months, but this was compensated in June by interest credits.

SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS - New South Wales and Australia - £ million

End of Month	NEW SOUTH WALES			AUSTRALIA			
	C'wealth Savings Bank	Other Savings Banks	All Savings Banks	C'wealth Savings Banks	State Savings Banks	Other Savings Banks	All Savings Banks
June 1954	339.8		339.8	648.7	361.4		1010.1
June 1955	338.6		353.6	690.1	383.3		1073.4
Jan. 1956	363.0	4.3	367.3	701.3	385.9	7.5	1094.7
May 1956	356.7	20.0	376.7	690.7	383.0	37.9	1111.6
June 1956	363.8	22.9	386.7	705.9	391.1	43.5	1140.5
Change, End of June to End of June							
1953-54	+ 14.0		+ 14.0	+ 28.5	+ 13.0		+ 41.5
1954-55	+ 18.8		+ 18.8	+ 41.4	+ 21.9		+ 63.3
1955-56	+ 5.2	22.9	+ 28.1	+ 15.8	+ 7.8	+ 43.5	+ 67.1

For New South Wales the net rise in deposits with all savings banks in 1955-56 of £28m. or 8% was high compared with recent years in which it averaged about £20m; it was restricted to the new private savings banks and interest credits with the Commonwealth Savings Bank. The increase in other States was not so high in comparison, and the excess of deposits over withdrawals (before interest) of £44½m. for Australia in 1955-56 was about the same as in the two preceding years. While the new savings institutions did not lead to an overall increase in the Australian rate of savings growth for the year 1955-56, it appears that they helped to maintain the annual rate of 4% (excluding interest) of the 1953/54-1954/55 period which had begun to flag towards the end of the year 1955. Recorded interest credits for the year continued to rise and amounted to about £7m. in New South Wales and £22½m. in Australia for the year 1955-56. A rise in interest rates of about 10% applied as from 1st April 1956.

The amount of new deposits and withdrawals in New South Wales has grown steadily during the past ten years, partly through the rise in social service credits to savings accounts and their subsequent use, and in recent months also through transfer between Commonwealth and other savings banks. The yearly turnover of savings bank deposits, expressed as the ratio of withdrawals to total deposits, was about 77% immediately before and after the war, rising to 87% in 1954-55 and 92% in 1955-56. New South Wales depositors' balances at end of June rose from £103 to £108 per head of population (from £154 to £157 per operative account) between 1955 and 1956 but they remained below the Australian average of £122 per head of population.

SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS - NEW SOUTH WALES

Year ended June	New Deposits	Interest Added	Total Credits	With- drawals	Net Rise in Dep's.	Deposits, end of Period	
						Total	Per Head of Population
			£ m	i	l	l i o n	£
1939	66.6	1.6	68.2	67.2	1.0	87.5	32
1952	262.0	4.8	266.8	246.7	20.1	304.6	191
1953	266.0	5.4	271.7	257.1	14.6	319.2	94
1954	291.4	6.1	297.5	276.9	20.6	339.8	99
1955	322.4	6.8	329.2	310.4	18.8	358.6	103
1956	366.2x	7.3x	373.5	345.4	28.1	376.7	108

x Subject to slight revision.

RETAIL TRADE = Large Sydney Stores

The rise in turnover of large city stores slowed down from 4½ in 1955 over 1954 and in March quarter 1956 over 1955 to 1½ in May 1956, and the turnover in June 1956 was actually 1½ less than a year earlier. Only small rises in stock values were recorded in recent months; this may be partly due to credit restrictions and the effect of import cuts, and may be connected with the lag in turnovers.

LARGE SYDNEY STORES - Percentage Changes Compared with Previous Year

	VALUE OF SALES				VALUE OF STOCK (End of Period)			
	1953	1954	1955	1956	1953	1954	1955	1956
March Quarter	- 4	+ 7	+ 4	+ 4	- 26	+ 4	+ 12	+ 1
April	- 3	+10	+ 5	+ 2	- 25	+ 6	+ 10	+ 5
May	-	+11	+ 5	+ 1	- 26	+11	+ 9	+ 4
June	+ 9	+ 8	+ 4	- 1	- 24	+12	+ 9	+ 2
Six Months	- 1	+ 8	+ 4½	+ 2				

NEW SOUTH WALES ACCOUNTS

Increased receipts from tax reimbursements and state taxes raised Governmental revenue in July from £8.2m. in 1954 and £8.6m. in 1955 to £9.3m. in 1956, but Governmental expenditure rose at the same time from £5m. and £6m. to £7m. Increased fares, as from 1st July 1956, raised revenue from the tram and bus services from about £800,000 in July 1954 and 1955 to £1.1m. in 1956, but they were not reflected in railway revenue figures for July 1956 which remained about £400,000 below 1955 and 1954. Loan expenditure for works was £2.1m. in July 1956.

NEW SOUTH WALES ACC DETS (£millions)

Revenue Item	Month of July			Expenditure Item	Month of July		
	1954	1955	1956		1954	1955	1956
Tax Reimbursements	3.9	4.1	4.4	Net Debt Charges	.8	.9	1.0
State Taxation	2.8	2.9	3.1	Other, excl. Debt Charges			
Other Governmental	1.5	1.6	1.8	Governmental	4.2	5.0	6.0
Railways	5.4	5.4	5.0	Railways	5.2	5.3	5.9
Tram & Bus Service	.8	.8	1.1	Tram & Bus Service	.9	.8	1.0
Sydney Harbour	.3	.2	.2	Sydney Harbour	.1	.1	.1
TOTAL REVENUE	14.7	15.0	15.6	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	11.2	12.1	14.0
GROSS LOAN EXPENDITURE ON WORKS AND SERVICES					2.0	2.2	2.1

PART III : RURAL INDUSTRIESTHE SEASON (See also graph p. 87)

Rainfall in most inland areas of the State in July 1956, for the seventh month in succession, was well above the seasonal average. Extensive flooding occurred in the Central and South Western river. The floods in the Darling and Murray river systems caused by earlier rains were further aggravated by falls in July, and the flood peak which reached the Wentworth area caused extensive damage. Continuous rain has led to a deterioration of pastures and condition of stock, particularly of sheep. Weather conditions have been very unfavourable for the sowing and growth of cereals and crop yield prospects are considered very poor for the coming harvest.

RAINFALL INDEX, NEW SOUTH WALES, "Normal Rainfall" = 100 for each month

	Sheep Districts					Wheat Districts				Coastal Dairying Districts			
	N	C	S	W	Total	N	C	S	Total	N	C	S	Total
1955-Year	133	151	133	160	141	142	142	135	138	120	135	103	129
1956-Jan.	162	197	199	145	182	135	174	206	189	128	162	91	152
-Feb.	386	388	142	265	294	370	384	131	227	402	362	452	393
-March	136	396	461	659	372	113	393	503	425	120	245	291	174
-April	155	164	264	146	192	170	175	266	230	64	43	57	58
-May	258	197	249	252	237	299	203	260	250	127	156	245	150
-June	155	163	176	129	161	149	155	156	155	126	198	244	160
-July	104	192	215	344	191	115	172	235	204	17	39	102	34

N: NORTHERN; C: CENTRAL; S: SOUTHERN; W: WESTERN.

WOOL

Preliminary estimates put Australian wool production for 1955-56 at the record figure of 1,399 m. lbs., an increase of 9% over the previous record established in 1954-55. Production would probably have been somewhat higher in 1955-56 if shearing had not been delayed in Queensland through an industrial dispute. State details for 1955-56 wool production are not yet available, but wool store delivery statistics suggest that production was close to record levels in all the mainland States. The heavier wool clip follows the steady post-war rise in Australian sheep numbers from 96 mill. in 1946 (after a war-time peak of 125m.) to 131m. in 1955 and about 136m. in 1956, and it is due partly also to the gradual lifting of the average fleece weight from about 8lb. in the early 1940's to from 8½lb. to 9lb. in more recent years (9.1 lb. estim. for 1955-56).

The quantity of wool sold at Australian centres exceeded 4m. bales for the first time in 1955-56. The number of bales was 9% greater, and their weight 10% greater, than in 1954-55, and this partly compensated for the decrease in average price of 13%. The total value of sales of £334m. for 1955-56 was less than in 1954-55 (£353m.), 1953-54, (£391m.) and 1952-53, (£405m.) but exceeded earlier seasons, with the exception of the 1950-51 peak of £636m.

SHEEP AND WOOL = AUSTRALIA

SHEEP NUMBERS	WOOL PRODUCED				DISPOSAL OF WOOL			Exports in Spec son £m.
	As at 31st March. Season	Shorn in Season	Shorn, incl. crutchings	Total incl. skin wool.	Inst.	Sales in Season		
			mill.	million lbs.	Qty. mill.	Value £m.	Avg. Price d. per lb greasy	
			m illion	million lbs.	bales.			
Average								
36/7-38/9	113	115	889	996	2.86	48	13.3	50
1950-51	116	119	1,029	1,118	3.55	636	144.2	633
1953-54	127	133	1,138	1,246	3.85	391	81.5	410
1954-55	131	137	1,174	1,283	3.95	353	70.9	353
1955-56 P	136	142	1,289	1,399	4.30	334	61.5	338

P. Preliminary; 1955-56 sales incl. July.

DAIRYING

New South Wales dairy production throughout most of the year ended June 1956 was maintained at a level above that of recent years, and the year's total wholemilk output (for all purposes) of about 335 $\frac{1}{2}$ m. gall. was 7% higher than in 1954-55 and the best for twenty years. During the ten seasons ended 1941 output exceeded 300m. gall. each year, reaching a peak of 369m. gall. in 1933-34 but subsequently production declined to 254m. gall. in 1946-47 and has been slow to recover since. Most of the additional milk output during the past two seasons went into butter factories which in 1955-56 produced 92m. lbs. of butter. This is the highest output since 1943-44 but remained well below the level of the 1930's when it regularly exceeded 100m. lbs. (143m. lbs. in 1933-34). Milk Board deliveries continued to rise in 1955-56, reaching the record of 71 $\frac{1}{2}$ m. gall. Factory cheese output of 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ m. lbs. in 1955-56 was the highest since before the war, and use of milk for other processed products was also higher than in 1954-55 though less than in some recent years. As a proportion of total milk used in the State, butter factories took 57% in 1954-55 and 1955-56 and the Milk Board 22% and 21%; this compares with 76% for butter and 9% for the Milk Board in 1938-39.

WHOLEMILK = PRODUCTION AND USE = NEW SOUTH WALES

Year Ended June	(1) WHOLE MILK All Purposes	(2) BUTTER Factory	(3) CHEESE Output	(4) MILK BOARD Deliveries	(5) PROCESSED Milk	(6) OTHER USES
M i l l i o n						
1939	311.4	236.2 (114)	7.2	26.5	4.9	36.6
1953	317.4	172.3 (83)	7.1	62.2	24.0	51.8
1954	282.2	138.1 (67)	7.2	65.5	19.5	51.9
Prelim. 1955	313.5	179.8 (87)	5.6	68.6	11.6	47.9
1956	335.6	190.9 (92)	7.6	71.5	17.0	48.6
P e r c e n t a g e						
1939	100%	76%	2%	9%	1%	12%
1954	100%	49%	3%	23%	7%	18%
Prelim. 1955	100%	57%	2%	22%	4%	15%
" 1956	100%	57%	2%	21%	5%	15%

(1) Total State dairy output. (2) Weight in m. lbs. in brackets at rate of 2.075g. per lb. (3) 1g. as equal to 1 lb. (4) Wholemilk supplied to Board (5) Used for condensed, concentrated etc. milk. (6) Incl. fresh milk not sold through Board and farm-made butter and cheese.

Estimates of butter, cheese and margarine supplies available to consumers in this State are given below; they are incomplete to the extent that they omit certain interstate movements, in particular those carried by road and air. The recovery of butter production in this State in 1954-55 and 1955-56 reduced import requirements from Victoria and Queensland which in some earlier years were equivalent to over one-quarter of total supplies. Oversea exports remained comparatively small in comparison with pre-war years. The estimated quantity consumed was 95m. lbs. in 1953-54, 97m. lbs. in 1954-55 and 93m. lbs. in 1955-56, and the estimated consumption per head of population which had been about 28 lbs. in 1953-54 and 1954-55 decreased to 27 lbs. in 1955-56.

Margarine production (Table and Other) fell from over 50m. lb. in recent years to 46m. lb. in 1955-56, and interstate and oversea exports of margarine from about 15m. lb. to 10m. lb. The quantity available for consumption in New South Wales remained near 35m. lb. in the three years but the per capita consumption fell a little, from 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. to 10 lb. Cheese production and supply which had fallen appreciably in 1954-55 recovered in 1955-56 when the per head consumption was 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. as against 2 lb. in 1954-55.

Per head consumption of butter and cheese in recent years has been appreciably less and margarine consumption a little more than in the immediate pre-war period. Factors to be considered in these comparisons include changes in the standard of living and consumption habits, as well as in the age composition of the population.

BUTTER, MARGARINE, CHEESE - SUPPLY AND USE - NEW SOUTH WALES

Year Ended June	1939	1951	1952	1954	1955x	1956x
BUTTER	in million lbs					
(1) Production	118.8	80.9	56.5	70.2	89.9	95.6
(2) Ascertained Imports	2.9	23.3	26.9	28.5	12.8	3.7
(3) Oversea Exports	-24.8	-6.5	-0.7	-2.2	-2.7	-2.7
(4) Other Movements	-4.3	-2.7	-6.5	-1.5	-3.3	-3.6
Estim. Consumption	92.6	95.0	76.2	95.0	96.7	93.0
MARGARINE (Table & Other)	lb. per head of population					
	34	29	23	28	28	27
CHEESE	in million lbs.					
(5) Production	27.0	41.9	52.2	50.3	50.9	46.1
(6) Estim. Consumption	21.7	29.8	41.1	35.0	35.6	35.7
	lb. per head of population					
	8	9	12½	10½	10½	10
(7) Production	7.5	6.6	4.5	7.2	5.6	7.6
(8) Estim. Consumption	11.1	n.a.	12.2	8.8	7.2	8.3

(1) Factory and Farm. (2) Sydney arrivals by rail from Queensland and Victoria from all States. (4) Mainly factory use for ice cream etc. and changes in cool stores stocks. (6) Adjusted for N.S.W. oversea exports and interstate shipments from Sydney. (8) Adjusted for rail imports into Sydney from other States, inter-state movements by sea and oversea exports. x. Preliminary.

